



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Seaport seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in July 2002 to 4.8 percent from June's rate of 4.1 percent as shown in Seaport Table 1. In July 2000, the rate was 4.2 percent. Even though total employment increased, the number of people unemployed increased at a faster rate. In spite of the month-over-month increase, year-over-year comparisons show a decrease in total employment.

In July, the Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* decreased by 230 jobs because of temporary layoffs in *Education*. These temporary layoffs were expected and followed seasonal trends because of summer vacation. The August and September numbers will show an increase as teachers return to classrooms. On the plus side, two industries, *Food and Kindred Products* and *Construction*, created new jobs in July. Employment in *Food and Kindred Products* increased for the pea harvest and *Construction* increased because of residential construction.

SPECIAL TOPIC

The Nez Perce Tribe

A University of Idaho study has found that the Nez Perce Indian tribe has become one of the largest employers in North Central Idaho because of the operation of two reservation casinos, which contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. The study reports the Nez Perce Tribe ranks second in employment impacts in Nez Perce County just behind the Potlatch Corporation. Research economist Steven Peterson at the university's Center of Business Development and Entrepreneurship conducted the study along with economics professor Michael DiNoto.

"The results clearly show that tribal operations are now major contributors to the local and state economies. The jobs and economic benefits that tribal operations provide are particularly important to rural areas in northern and southeastern Idaho where jobs and economic development are most needed," Peterson said. He also noted that before tribes had gaming, unemployment on reservations was over 70 percent. The

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	July 2002*	June 2002	July 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,620	35,230	35,550	1.1	0.2
Unemployment	1,700	1,460	1,480	16.4	14.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8	4.1	4.2		
Total Employment	33,920	33,770	34,070	0.4	-0.4
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,460	35,200	35,420	0.7	0.1
Unemployment	1,530	1,400	1,340	9.3	14.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.3	4.0	3.8		
Total Employment	33,930	33,800	34,080	0.4	-0.4
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	26,080	26,310	26,050	-0.9	0.1
Goods-Producing Industries	5,550	5,230	5,530	6.1	0.4
Mining & Construction	1,520	1,400	1,570	8.6	-3.2
Manufacturing	4,030	3,830	3,960	5.2	1.8
Food Processing	250	90	250	177.8	0.0
Lumber & Wood Products	730	720	750	1.4	-2.7
Paper Products	1,680	1,670	1,700	0.6	-1.2
All Other Manufacturing	1,370	1,350	1,260	1.5	8.7
Service-Producing Industries	20,530	21,080	20,520	-2.6	0.0
Transportation	1,350	1,380	1,370	-2.2	-1.5
Communications & Utilities	270	260	290	3.8	-6.9
Wholesale Trade	940	970	980	-3.1	-4.1
Retail Trade	4,870	4,920	4,970	-1.0	-2.0
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,730	1,740	1,410	-0.6	22.7
Services	6,740	6,820	6,680	-1.2	0.9
Government Administration	2,790	2,810	2,810	-0.7	-0.7
Government Education	1,840	2,180	2,010	-15.6	-8.5

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

jobs supported directly and indirectly by tribal gaming have moved hundreds of tribal members off of public assistance programs and reduced unemployment. The study estimated that the resulting reduction in federal, state, and local welfare and social service payments saves taxpayers an estimated \$6 million a year. The study also found that Idaho's education system benefits from Indian gambling and that those benefits could soon be expanded. Since the mid-1990s, Idaho tribes have voluntarily donated millions of dollars to local schools, universities, and other education programs.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Clearwater County

- A new King's Discount Department Store opened in Orofino. The store sells a variety of items—crafts, sewing supplies, bedding, towels, rugs, baby furniture and supplies, clothing, shoes, school supplies, electronics, health and beauty supplies, canning supplies, and novelty items. King's operates 35 discount department stores in

Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, and Utah. The new Orofino store employs 15 workers in full- and part-time jobs.

- U.S. Senator Mike Crapo has secured pledges from top federal officials to find ways to mitigate economic woes caused by Dworshak Reservoir drawdowns. Each summer the 55-mile-long reservoir on the North Fork of the Clearwater River is lowered 80 feet as water is flushed downstream to cool the Snake River and help flush young fall Chinook salmon to the ocean. The Endangered Species Act is driving the annual drawdowns, but the act doesn't contain a provision to compensate communities when federal actions disrupt local economies. Bob Lohn, regional administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seattle, said the Bush administration wants to protect species while also protecting communities. An ideal solution that will leave the reservoir full during the summer is not likely, Lohn speculated. But he added that a potential silver lining to the drawdowns and other efforts may be positive economic effects of the robust hatchery salmon and steelhead runs of the past few years that have attracted thousands of anglers. The Bonneville Power Administration distributes \$500 million a year for fish and wildlife recovery and a large amount of that money ends up with different entities in the Clearwater River basin area. This year the basin received \$14 million in projects including \$5.2 million for the Nez Perce Tribal hatchery at Cherrylane.

Idaho and Lewis Counties

- CompuNet, Inc., a Grangeville based company, has provided reliable wireless Internet access to a limited number of customers for over a year in the Grangeville area. Since July 1, CompuNet, Inc. has accepted new customers. Currently, wireless service connection provides Internet access to more than 23 business and residential customers with 175 PCs online. The company designed their wireless network to be fast and reliable by using high quality vendors like AT&T and Cisco. "The high speed Internet access has allowed our company to work for companies like the Arizona Cardinals without leaving our desk," said Nolan Schoo of CompuNet, Inc.
- Steelhead anglers should have another good season after September 1. According to early predictions, 171,000 steelhead could be on their way to Lower Granite Dam, the last barrier to entering Idaho fishing waters. If that figure holds up, it will be slightly more than twice the 10-year average. About 85,000 steelhead at Lower Granite Dam is the average seasonal run. Last year's steelhead run overwhelmed

Idaho hatcheries and provided some of the best steelhead fishing anglers could remember.

- Area native and recent returnee Bill Shira and his crew (Apple River Productions) have been busy filming the movie, "Where Rivers Meet." Director Shira, who grew up in Clearwater and Grangeville, has been behind the camera almost 20 years working on a variety of projects. Up to 100 people from Idaho County and the surrounding area have been used as extras in the film. The Clearwater store and a Stites church owned by the Nez Perce Tribe located alongside the river in Kamiah have been filming sites.

Latah County

- Enrollment at the University of Idaho is expected to increase by 2.9 percent this year, an additional 269 students. That increase, coupled with faculty and staff members lost to early retirement incentives and better paying jobs elsewhere, is making it difficult for students to register for some classes. For example, five fewer sections of English 101, required of almost all freshmen, are being offered this fall, according to Dave Barber, chair of UI's English Department. To make up the difference, officials raised enrollment in each class. The English Department lost seven faculty members this year and, because of the budget cutbacks, was only able to hire one instructor to replace the instructors who left.

Nez Perce And Asotin (Wa.) Counties

- Enrollment at Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) is up 0.59 percent, but officials say students will not see that many scheduling problems. "We will continue to add classes as our classes fill," said President Dene Thomas. "We will make room for students in our basic core classes, for the most part." Thomas said part of the reason LCSC has been able to escape scheduling problems this year is because of the way the school made cuts after the state holdbacks. "We made strategic, targeted cuts," Thomas said. "What we have is a number of specific classes that are simply not available as opposed to across-the-board cuts. We didn't do those types of cuts so that we would be able to handle increases as they come."

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